

LAND OF QUEER CUSTOMS

PECULIAR EXPERIENCES OF A TRAVELER IN GERMANY.

The Law is Most Rigidly Enforced by the Officials in Regard to Boarding Trains as One Person Has Learned Much to His Consternation and Disgust.

Dresden, May 28, 1895.

To the Editor of the JOURNAL AND COURIER:

When I was a lad I remember reading Tom Hood's unique and humorous account of his trip down the Rhine; he was often in terrible straits even to obtain the necessities of life (he did not know one word of the German language); when he wished an egg the poor fellow would clap his sides like a hen flapped its wings, and after cackling like a barn-yard fowl, in this way he would communicate his desires to the hotel waiter, and let as it by magic a cooked egg would in due time appear; if he thirsted and desired a cooling draught of milk the unfortunate man was obliged to "moo" after the fashion of a patient sober-eyed cow, and what surprised him above all was the astounding fact that all the little fellows of five years of age talked so volubly in the German language, while he, a great man of fifty years, could only make his desires known by the ridiculous gestures of a pantomime. I have often suffered in the same manner as mentioned above, especially so when I first came into this land of singular customs. After a residence of nearly two years I find myself moving about with a considerable degree of intelligence, and I am positive that I shall never starve from the fact of not knowing how to ask for bread and water through the medium of the German tongue. I can not but smile when I think of my unfortunate experiences soon after landing in Germany. We had just left the steamer at Cuxhaven (only eight days from New York), and on our way to Dresden, when at eight o'clock on a Saturday night we made a stop at the pretty little town of Roderan, twenty miles north of Dresden. From a passenger I understood that we would remain five minutes; so I jumped down from the carriage and walked leisurely to a lunch counter and purchased a "semel mit Schinken" and a glass of Munich beer. One minute later the bell rang, the whistle shrieked and there was a general rush. I quickly dropped my "schinken" and started full run for my carriage, which was the very last of a very long train. Now the law in Germany is that no one shall board a moving train of cars. It makes no matter how slow the train moves, the law must be obeyed. I frantically endeavored to jump on the moving cars, and did succeed in gaining the wide step; there stood the huge head of a Teuton guard glaring and shrieking "Nein! Nein!" as I clung desperately to the step he pushed me off, and I verily believe that uncouth official would have calmly beheld me ground to death beneath the trucks rather than to permit "one jot or tittle of the law to perish." To struggle was useless; away the train flew into the night, and as I beheld the frightened faces of my wife and three children flattened against the window panes I felt as desolate as poor old Robinson Crusoe did when the waves flung him on the wild sands of that lonely little island in the great Pacific ocean. People glared at me by the lantern lights as I vainly endeavored to speak in an unknown tongue. I seemed like a bit of fotsam and jetsam which had drifted ashore from a shipwreck. In some countries in the olden days, sailors who escaped to shore from a sinking ship were often put to death as soon as possible by superstitious natives, and I feared the same might happen to me. I fortunately discovered a telegraph office near by and sent off two dispatches to Dresden, and immediately afterwards a Napoleonic looking individual covered with brass buttons, epaulettes and wreaths of blue braid, placing his hand on the hilt of an enormous sword, accosted me, and I was made palpably aware that I was "wanted" at police headquarters; for the first time in my life I was under arrest (and the last time I trust); arrived at police headquarters, I was confronted by my two telegrams, which by that time I supposed had been delivered at the hotel in Dresden. The chief inquisitor in that chamber of horrors could not decipher the word "wife" in one of my telegrams, (as I now recall the event I do not blame him, for it was a fearful scrawl); oh! how my education had been neglected; for the very life of me I did not know that "Frau" was German for "wife." My explanations and protestations were lost upon the stern-faced official; his very buttons seemed to stand up in rage. After a long inquisitorial examination of my personal appearance, which at last seemed to pass muster (but I think they suspected me all the same of being an anarchist, and what assisted this suspicion was the fact that I had no luggage, not even an American "gripsack") and after considerable running about the office and smothered confabulations by minor officials and a good deal of hurried writing by a long thin clerk on a long-legged, dilapidated stool, the chief of the police of Roderan approached me solemnly, and pronouncing some long sentences filled with very long German words, shook my hand cordially; he had found an innocent man instead of an anarchist or political enemy as was first supposed. I was released; I was a free man; I felt that peculiar delight which thrills a condemned man when suddenly reprieved.

The whole business reminded me of the lines "Parturient Montes et nascitur ridiculus mus"—it was a mere flash

in the pan, and there are many such in Germany.

I was then tackled by a weedy, earnest young individual; this young man soon afterwards developed wonderful powers of suction and drank in an hour more beer than I had ever seen in my whole life; he tried me in very bad French, and finally by means of broken English, indifferent French and (oh! such grimaces and contortions) gestures, we did begin to slightly understand one another. I signified my desire for a sort of "German before breakfast" book, and my companion soon produced a German conversational book badly battered and torn. I seized it like a drowning man grasps at a straw; all that I could find, however, was the complete conjugation of the German verb "Lernen," to learn. The man who wrote that book should be kept in a prison, in solitary confinement for life. The changes which he rung with that little inoffensive verb were wonderful to behold. I turned page after page, hoping to find a word to signify I hunger, I thirst, for I hungered while others about me were feasting. I desired food and drink; (my companion seemed perfectly satisfied with his beer and tobacco); but as I sought in the little book for suitable expressions to convey my desires I found naught but "I shall love," "I love," "I shall or will love," "Love Thou;" in vain I looked for the variations of the verb "to eat." I dashed the gruesome German book of love upon the floor and became despondent. By humiliating and ridiculous signs I finally obtain food, and my companion Mentor who in vain endeavored to fill himself with beer at the expense of my willing purse, gave me many interesting facts about Roderan. I learned that it was a town of fifteen thousand inhabitants, and there was not one who could speak the English language; what delighted me chiefly was the fact that a railway train would arrive from Berlin at 11 p. m. and proceed at once to Dresden. When the train arrived I jumped aboard and made my exit from Roderan. I did not arrive at Dresden until 1 a. m., for I discovered I was traveling on an omnibus train, which is the slowest of all trains, and that is the style in which I crawled into Dresden in the early hours of Sunday morning. I have often passed through Roderan since, and it is with difficulty that I can refrain from smiling as I look out upon that pretty railroad station where I got my first serious lesson of German customs. I can give to my readers the same good advice which Hood prescribed to his friends: "Never go to France (Germany) unless you know the lingo. For if you do, like me, You'll repent, by Jingo."

Such bowing, saluting and air scrapping as one sees here in Germany. Germans are very polite; in fact I think they excel the French in their urbanity. When a German meets a friend or comes his hat, up goes his hand, and from the saluting and waving of hats that follows one is reminded of the vigorous hat waving one sees when the blue leads the red at New London. To look up a long German street and to behold the hats in the air, on the salute, you would really be much amused. Hats do not last long in Germany, for they are worn out by continual saluting. Little lads at school (even in the two fine English schools) when they meet on the street invariably raise their little German caps, and girls always curtsy to one another as well as to their elders. The polite respect which children show to their elders is refreshing to witness. In no country, unless far forth in the West Indies and England, have I ever seen such polite children as here in Germany. When one enters a railway carriage or street car, or omnibus, the last comers salute those already in their seats, and this same custom obtains in hotels, beer gardens and in all places where people meet to congregate. If a person already seated does not return the salute he is at once looked upon as a rude fellow. Peasants as they meet you on the high road outside the city invariably salute you with "Guten Tag"; they salute first and you are supposed to return the salute. Natives are always very particular to politely return a peasant's salute. The same custom holds in the houses; every servant as he meets you in the morning in the halls or rooms greets his superior first with "Guten morgen" or simply "Morgen"; to which a polite greeting is returned. Saxon German is not pure German, and the language as spoken in Saxony and Bavaria is singular and extremely harsh. The customs and manners which I have carefully seen here have greatly interested me, and to describe even a tithe of them would be a difficult matter. Schools begin at 7 a. m. and keep in session till 1 p. m., with thirty minutes recess; there are afternoon sessions daily except Saturday from 2 to 4:30, then a compulsory hour on the playgrounds. Every school-boy wears a distinctive school cap, and by variations of certain colors and the manner of arithmetical combinations and permutations an infinite variety of caps can be produced. The opera and theater commence at 6:30 p. m. and close promptly at 10:30. All houses must be shut at 10:30; at this hour the outer door must be locked tightly; very strict custom, which is paid to get into your own house, and Americans often find it hard to obey German laws. I did chafe at many things, but after a residence of nearly two years I observe the laws like a very German, and I feel grateful to the authorities for taking pretty good care of me. I had heard, before coming here, that foreigners were very heavily taxed; one day a big official envelope was sent to my room. Here comes the tax bill I cried; I considered it pretty hard to pay taxes in New Haven and in Dresden, too. I tore open the paper and a very formidable looking document couched in the longest words to be found in the German language (some words had twenty-five letters) informed me that great fortresses as terrible as an army with banners, that I must step up to the captain's office and settle.

After replying to the collector's office I found that my tax amounted to four marks, or one dollar, for the privilege of living for nearly two years in a delightfully clean city, with pretty parks to walk through, a cheap opera, and privileges and advantages without number. Why, a peep at the "Sistine Madonna" is worth a dollar. When a person hires an apartment he is supposed to spend four times the amount of the rent he pays; for instance, if he pays eight hundred dollars for his apartment he is taxed two per cent. on \$3,200. Rents are always paid in advance, and six months' notice must always be given by the tenant if he wishes to quit. Very many rent houses from October 1 to April 1. Very many wealthy people of different nations have

settled in Dresden, where they obtain most superior educational advantages for their families. Houses and villas are very elegant, very lofty between porches, and with grand rooms, especially with large and beautiful parlors and dining-rooms. Wiener Strasse is a street lined on both sides with magnificent villas and exceedingly well kept grounds. Flowers abound here, the lilac trees (not bushes) can be counted by thousands, and the rose trees are beautiful to look at. Servants' wages are low, cooks obtain three dollars per month, butlers five dollars, maids two dollars and one-half; the Hausmann is often the cook's husband, and gets his rent free on the premises for which he does odd jobs and keeps the grounds in order. To keep a coach and pair in Germany does not require by any means a large sum, and the livestock, especially horses, can be had at a moderate rate. Street cars are propelled by horses and by electricity; they are very clean and similar to American cars; two and one-half cents will take a passenger a fair distance, a mile or more; four cents admits of a long ride, while five cents will carry you for miles. Although Germans live much in the open air, they always fear a draught of air. If the front door of a street car happens to be open a single passenger can order it closed; no matter how hot the day may be, a German hates a current of air worse than he dislikes a Frenchman, which means a good deal. The pretty open cars of Berlin are supplied with glass frames at either end, the result is they are fearfully hot. The houses are beautiful in summer, the windows are screwed tight fast; the result is a terrible state of inconvenience.

I knew a small boy who was so astonished to behold German men walking about the streets of Berlin and riding in closed omnibuses clad in overcoats in the hottest of July weather that he said: Papa, I think there must be a special hell prepared for Germans, for they never seem to feel the heat at all.

Germans are truly perfect salamanders.

Beer is the national beverage of Germany. It is an innocent drink, a trifle stronger than water and nothing like our lager beer as drunk in the States. A German professor connected with the University of Berlin, had just returned from the United States, and he said to me: "I should have been ill had I drank the lager beer of Milwaukee and Chicago, for I analyzed it myself and the different ingredients which I found astonished me. Why, the 'dextrine' alone would poison me in time." I know that the constant use of ice water in the United States does great harm to health. Physicians tell us this. Here beer takes the place of ice water. It is not cold, but being kept in cool cellars, its temperature is far above that of ice water, but quite cool enough to be very agreeable and healthy. Beer gardens and restaurants abound everywhere, not only in the cities but all over the country, and if a person should walk from city to city, he would find these comfortable, pretty "restaurants" every five miles as he advanced forward. A true German "restaurant" at every "restaurant."

The "restaurants" are scrupulously neat and clean. They generally have pretty gardens filled with flowers and shady trees, under which in summer the tables are set. Many have running water and fountains and a typical German band of music. At the tables you will meet members of the best class of society (not any of the court set). Ladies resort thither with their children in the long afternoon while they imbibe beer. You meet there clergymen and their wives, physicians, merchants, college professors, and, in fact, the better classes. Before each is placed a glass containing half a litre of beer, the rich dark Munich beer, or the Culmbach beer which is nearly black, or the Pilsner, as light as amber. This latter is called the popular beer of Austria and Germany. It is said to make stout people thin, while the dark beer is sure to give a weight of thin drinkers, "medio tullestimus." It is a strange way the Germans have when they raise their glass first to their lips. They all hold out their glasses at arm's length and quietly say "Prosit, prosit." A German is a long time drinking off his glass, fully twenty minutes, and they are never in a hurry. A quick, hasty, nervous American will call for a glass of beer and it will be handed to him like a flash, to the astonishment of all present, but the Americans above all others are accustomed to rush rapidly and too often are old men at sixty, when the same age over here is but the prime of life.

The capacity of some Germans is prodigious! They seem to distill like rubber balls, and to fill them with beer is impossible, but generally two glasses seem to suffice. Weiss (white) beer is served in a glass of two inches deep, gold-fish globes, and not unlike them. More than half of the contents is foam and I think it disgustingly sour.

It is certain, however, to make fat people thin and healthy. From a pretty long residence in this country, I must confess I can detect no evil effects from beer drinking among the Germans. You never will see a drunken or boisterous person, nor loitering lounging on the streets, nor any of the elements to walk through, a cheap opera, and privileges and advantages without number. Why, a peep at the "Sistine Madonna" is worth a dollar. When a person hires an apartment he is supposed to spend four times the amount of the rent he pays; for instance, if he pays eight hundred dollars for his apartment he is taxed two per cent. on \$3,200. Rents are always paid in advance, and six months' notice must always be given by the tenant if he wishes to quit. Very many rent houses from October 1 to April 1. Very many wealthy people of different nations have

sit, they might, if they were not such a prejudiced class, learn a lesson which would have a lasting effect. That large villa should indeed be the abode of music and harmony, for the happy bricklayers when they put in the bricks accompany their craft with sweet musical notes. All the house servants have an appearance of contentment and such a willingness as they exhibit in their household duties is a pleasure to behold. American housekeepers are much surprised when first coming to this country to notice the great respect which servants show to their employers, and the ability and willingness to do what is required. House servants are allowed twice every month one evening "out;" they never leave the house during the daytime. There are many features in German housekeeping which might be introduced to our own country with the greatest possible advantage. A German kitchen with its pretty stove of white and blue porcelain tiles and ornaments of brass, with a place for everything and everything in its place, with its tiled floor and pretty windows is something worthy of great admiration. When a German girl finishes her duties at school, she takes a six months' course in housekeeping, when a Saxon maiden becomes a young wife she is well equipped to begin the practical work of her life. This is a custom worthy of introduction into all countries. There are fine schools, colleges, scientific schools, and universities in Germany and there are over thirty-five thousand students, and if a man grows up without an education the blame rests upon himself alone. I have heard it said in the United States that in no other country save in Germany you can see newspapers widely and universally read. The number of newspapers in Germany is legion and they are read by all classes who are in touch with all the great questions of the day. The items of news concerning Nicaragua, and the Japanese and Chinese war, and the senseless and unwarranted interference of the three great powers with respect to the claims of the Japanese regarding the tenure of soil in Manchuria, are as well understood by the masses here as elsewhere. Germans devour the newspapers eagerly. In Prussia, Saxony, Bavaria, Austria, papers are rapidly bought up. And in Italy, which some people call priest-ridden and ignorant, because that fair land is the home of popery, the daily newspaper is read by all. Papers are published in very great numbers all over Italy. I made a special business of looking into the newspaper question. My own eyes were opened and I confess I was astonished to see them read so widely. The masses in Europe are as intelligent and well appearing as the same class in our own land.

The carts which are to be seen coming daily into Dresden from the hill towns of Saxony are of all possible descriptions; they are a perfect study. Some of them appear to my mind like those "singul carri" which were to be seen in the day of Julius Caesar on the "Agrium et difficile ita pae Sequano" which extended between the Jura mountain and the River Rhone. They are fearfully cumbersome vehicles; they no doubt are the descendants of those massive carts which the powerful chief Orgetorix purchased in large numbers during the great Helvetian war about 60 B. C. Then there are singular one horse carts with peculiar canvas tops drawn by a horse fastened to a pole, causing one to believe that the horse's mate had died on the way to the city. One would think shafts would be preferred to a long pole, but one cannot change German customs. There are carts and carts, but of all things deliver me from the dog carts, those little vehicles which clutter over the streets at four o'clock every morning drawn by a large dog regularly harnessed thereto. Dogs are harnessed just like horses and do as much for their masters as the pigs do for the small tenants in Ireland, they actually do much in paying the rent. Hundreds of these dog carts are to be seen here daily, they are a noisy nuisance to all save their owners. And then the dogs one is sure to see in Germany. Every sort and description of the canine species is to be found here from the pet poodle to the great German boar hound and the grand Russian blood hound. Then there is the sleek and delicate Italian greyhound and the different kinds of dogs cannot be numbered. Dogs are always muzzled with large comfortable leather muzzles; when they enter the Grosser Garten the custom is to restrain them with a leather cord two to three feet long, and they are always to run loose, great would be the destruction to flowerbeds and green lawns. Nearly every man you meet in the parks is leading his little dog "Schneider." We were driving a few days ago to the little village of Laubegau on the Elbe, and our carriage was stopped in the Grosse Garten, and an English lady with us was obliged to put a line of two inches of Scotch collie was following our carriage. The law demanded that that dog should be led by a line, ergo, the line. When the forester received three marks and was told that the extra mark was for himself, he really looked as if he thought the very larks were dropping from the skies. Policemen are rarely seen in the parks and suburbs, but if they are wanted for instance, to collect a fine, they seem to spring forth from the ground, like the soldiers which appeared as a gruesome harvest from the dragon's teeth which were sown long ago by Cadmus on the plain of Boetia. In the parks about Dresden there are certain conveniences which I have never seen at home, there are polite attendants and the fee very small. Comfortable park seats are placed in pleasant locations, some of which are painted upon them "Nur fur kinder," only for children; others have "Nur fur Erwachsene"—only for adults; others are marked "Nicht darauf treten"—do not walk over the seats; still others "Kein papier wegwerfen"—do not throw paper here. The result is everything is neat and orderly for the Germans, old and young willingly obey the laws. In certain places in the parks there are "Spiel Platze" or play grounds, for children, a kind of pocket or "cul de sac" where fifty or more children can play without molesting or disturbing their elders; a few loads of bright clean Elbe sand are placed in these play grounds, and there the little urchins dig and burrow and build forts as happily as if playing on the sea shore; the result is something their ages have never beheld.

In another letter I will mention a few more customs which have interested me in this strange but pleasant country.

VIATOR.

A Matter of Business.

(From Life.)

"It is possible, sir, that you may know my errand."

The elderly man who sat in his private office looked up from his desk as his visitor spoke and shook his head.

"I had thought," replied the other, as he dropped into a chair and reaching over and selecting one of the Havanas from a box on the desk, "that you might have noticed my growing regard for your charming daughter. I was first attracted to her, sir, some two months ago, and the acquaintance which promised so little at first has gradually ripened into love."

"It has, has it?" replied the older man, feverishly taking up a fountain and absent-mindedly trying to sign a check with it.

"Yes, sir," exclaimed the visitor, "it has, indeed. I have seen your daughter, sir, under the most trying circumstances, and never knew her to lose courage. She is the kind of a girl that I have, until now, searched for in vain. Her unflinching patience in the face of well-nigh insurmountable difficulties, her unvarying good humor, her persistence, all are qualities which in turn have appealed to me and inspired a depth of passionate love that up to this time I did not dream my nature was capable of. I will, however, pass over the sentimental side and proceed to business. I have come, sir, to ask if you will consider from me a proposal of marriage for the hand of your daughter."

As he spoke the elderly man had risen, and now stood over him with a dangerous gleam in his eye.

"No, sir!" he exclaimed, emphatically. "I will not! Such a proposition is absurd. I wouldn't consider it for a moment."

His young and courtly companion arose, and taking up his hat, prepared to leave the room.

"Very well, sir," he replied loftily, as he slipped a circular out of his pocket and handed it to the fair-haired typewriter near the door. "I was going to say, in case you had favorably considered my proposal, that I would gladly take a 25 per cent. discount off my bill of \$200 for teaching your daughter how to ride the bicycle."

Miscellaneous.

Philadelphia Dental Rooms,

781 Chapel Street.

Over William Frank & Co.'s store.

Best Set of Teeth on Rubber Base, \$8.00.

There is no better made, no matter what you pay elsewhere.

We also make a good set for \$5.00.

Office Open at All Hours.

Dr. L. D. MONKS, Manager.

THE REMINGTON WHEEL

Is the most satisfactory one ever sold in New Haven.

ASK RIDERS.

We have cheaper wheels and second-hand wheels, and are prepared to give you more for your money than anyone in New Haven.

The VERU Bicycle and Rubber Store,

158 Orange street.

District of New Haven, ss. Probate Court, June 18, 1895.

ESTATE OF DANIEL LOUGHERY, late of New Haven, in said district, deceased.

Application of Annie Loughery, widow, praying that letters of administration may be granted upon the estate of said deceased, as per application on file more fully appears, it is

ORDERED—That said application be heard and determined at a Probate court, to be held at New Haven, in said district, on the 25th day of June, A. D. 1895, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, and that notice be given of the pendency of said application and the time and place of hearing thereon, by publishing the same three times in some newspaper having a circulation in said district.

LIVINGSTON W. VEELEND, Judge of said Court.

NOTICE.

ALL persons interested will take notice that a public hearing will be held at the office of the Board of Selectmen, room 5, City Hall, on Friday evening, June 21st, 1895, to consider the proposed plan of the New Haven Street Railway Company in relation to the laying of additional tracks, erection of poles, etc., in Townsend avenue, commencing at a point near the north line of the property of James Gallagher, running thence through Townsend avenue and the new street south of the schoolhouse, thence through the light-house point road to a point near John W. Kennedy's house.

Held at New Haven, this 18th day of June, A. D. 1895.

ROBERT E. BALDWIN, WILLIAM F. STALLIN, REuben H. BROWN, LUTHER LUDINGTON, ALFRED W. JONES, JOSEPH B. CUNNINGHAM, HENRY C. BRUEZELDER, Selectmen.

Where To Go.

For the BEST Bread, To FERRY'S.

For large loaves Bread 25c, To FERRY'S.

For Grandmother's Bread, To FERRY'S.

For Finest Biscuit Made, To FERRY'S.

For a Quick Lunch, To FERRY'S.

For a nice Dinner, 30c, To FERRY'S.

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All Materials of the best, At FERRY'S.

46 to 50 Church st.

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"I had thought," replied the other, as he dropped into a chair and reaching over and selecting one of the Havanas from a box on the desk, "that you might have noticed my growing regard for your charming daughter. I was first attracted to her, sir, some two months ago, and the acquaintance which promised so little at first has gradually ripened into love."

"It has, has it?" replied the older man, feverishly taking up a fountain and absent-mindedly trying to sign a check with it.

"Yes, sir," exclaimed the visitor, "it has, indeed. I have seen your daughter, sir, under the most trying circumstances, and never knew her to lose courage. She is the kind of a girl that I have, until now, searched for in vain. Her unflinching patience in the face of well-nigh insurmountable difficulties, her unvarying good humor, her persistence, all are qualities which in turn have appealed to me and inspired a depth of passionate love that up to this time I did not dream my nature was capable of. I will, however, pass over the sentimental side and proceed to business. I have come, sir, to ask if you will consider from me a proposal of marriage for the hand of your daughter."

As he spoke the elderly man had risen, and now stood over him with a dangerous gleam in his eye.

"No, sir!" he exclaimed, emphatically. "I will not! Such a proposition is absurd. I wouldn't consider it for a moment."

His young and courtly companion arose, and taking up his hat, prepared to leave the room.

"Very well, sir," he replied loftily, as he slipped a circular out of his pocket and handed it to the fair-haired typewriter near the door. "I was going to say, in case you had favorably considered my proposal, that I would gladly take a 25 per cent. discount off my bill of \$200 for teaching your daughter how to ride the bicycle."

Miscellaneous.

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